

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 6-27 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 2, and 6-27 stand rejected.

Claims 1, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15-18, 20, 24, 26, and 27 stand amended. No new matter has been added. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 13, and 20 is found, at least, within paragraphs [0030]-[0033] of the specification. Support for the amendments to claims 6 and 24 is found, at least, within paragraph [0031] of the specification. Support for the amendments to claims 8, 10, 17, 18, 26, and 27 is found, at least, within paragraph [0029] of the specification. The amendments to dependent claims 15 and 16 are for consistency with amended independent claim 13.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, and 6-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2007/0208608 (“Amerasinghe”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,804,657 (“Sultan”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Amended independent claim 1 recites the following limitations:

defining a forecast snapshot, wherein

the defining comprises:

receiving an interval, wherein

the interval specifies a frequency at which forecast snapshots are generated,

receiving a specified day within the interval, wherein

the forecast snapshot is generated on the specified day, and

receiving specified roles of participants, wherein

the forecast snapshot comprises information regarding a member of the organization, and

the information indicates the member is assigned one of the specified roles;

causing a processor of the computer system to determine if a valid reporting hierarchy of the participants has been defined;

causing the processor to generate an indication of validity, in response to a determination that the valid reporting hierarchy of the participants has been defined;

in response to the indication of validity, causing the processor to automatically generate the forecast snapshot, wherein the forecast snapshot is based on opportunity information of the participants, and the forecast snapshot comprises the opportunity information; and causing the processor to automatically send an alert notifying the participants of the generation of the forecast snapshot.
(Emphasis added.)

Amended independent claims 13 and 20 recite comparable limitations. Applicants respectfully submit that Amerasinghe and Sultan, in any combination, fail to teach or suggest, at the very least: (1) determining a valid reporting hierarchy; (2) generating an indication of validity, in response to the determining; and (2) in response to the indication of validity, generating a forecast snapshot.

The Office Action correctly concedes that Amerasinghe fails to teach validating a hierarchy of participants. *See*, Office Action, p. 4. Thus, the Office Action resorts to Sultan in an attempt to demonstrate a teaching of “representatives of the organization are classified into a hierarchical structure wherein only those with permission at specific levels of the hierarchy are granted access to specific data.” Office Action, p. 4. The Office Action proceeds to note that “[i]t would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the forecasting system of Amerasinghe et al the ability to validate or authorize access to data based on permissions associated with a member’s position in the hierarchy as taught by Sultan.” Office Action, p. 4 (emphasis added). Every cited section of Sultan is silent regarding any type of validating or validity. Further, a keyword search reveals that the entire Sultan reference is silent regarding concepts such as “validating”, “validation”, or “validity.”

As noted by the Office Action, the cited sections of Sultan discuss restricting access based on a given permission level. However, an ordinary artisan would have no basis for interpreting restricting access to data to any type of validation of data. Applicants respectfully request guidance regarding how the Office Action has correlated Sultan’s access restrictions on data with the claimed validating of the hierarchy of forecast participants. Applicants find themselves at a loss to understand how, in the Office Action’s words, “valid or authorized access” could have any bearing whatsoever on the validity of the data being accessed. Having permission to access data has no bearing on the validity of the data itself. Conversely, whether or

not the data in question is valid has no effect on whether a user is permitted to access or modify data in some manner.

However, in the interest of advancing prosecution, Applicants have amended the claims to further clarify the claimed validation, as well as the fact that the generation of the forecast snapshot occurs in response to an indication of validity. Applicants respectfully submit that the following clarifying limitations further render Sultan's method of restricting data access irrelevant: (1) the determining of a valid reporting hierarchy, (2) generation of an indication of validity, and (3) the generation of a forecast snapshot if the hierarchy of participants is valid. Sultan's failure to teach any of these limitations stem from the fact that Sultan fails to teach anything like the determination if a valid reporting hierarchy of participants has been defined. Because Sultan fails to teach anything like the claimed determination of validity, it follows that Sultan also fails to teach the claimed generation of an indication of validity that is performed in response to the determination of validity. It also follows that Sultan fails to teach the claimed generation of a forecast snapshot in response to the indication of validity.

Thus, Amerasinghe and Sultan, in any combination, fail to teach or suggest all the elements of the claimed validating and generation of a forecast snapshot in response to an indication of validity of independent claims 1, 13, and 20. Dependent claims 2, 6-12, and 14-27 are allowable by virtue of ultimately being dependent on allowable independent claims.

Furthermore, with regard to claim 6, claim 6 recites additional limitations not taught or suggested by any combination of Amerasinghe and Sultan. As conceded by the Office Action, Amerasinghe fails to teach the claimed "validating" limitation. As discussed above, Sultan also fails to teach or suggest the claimed "validating" limitation. Because of this failure in Sultan, it follows that Sultan also fails to teach any particular method of validation such as the two claimed methods of validating in claim 6. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited sections of Amerasinghe and Sultan, in any combination, fail to teach or suggest all the elements of validation as recited in claim 6.

In similar contradistinction to the cited references, claim 10 recites additional limitations not taught or suggested by any combination of Amerasinghe and Sultan. Claim 10 recites new limitations that the Examiner has not had the opportunity to examine. However, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Amerasinghe nor Sultan teach or suggest the claimed limitations pertaining to the generation of the forecast summary. The cited references fail to teach this claimed limitation because neither Amerasinghe nor Sultan perform any processing of

opportunity information for each participant in order to generate the data fields of a summary in order to generate a forecast snapshot. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest that a forecast snapshot comprises an audit trail of edits made to the summary information. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited sections of Amerasinghe and Sultan, in any combination, fail to teach or suggest all the elements of generating the forecast snapshot as recited in claim 10.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that neither Amerasinghe nor Sultan, alone or in combination, provide disclosure of all the limitations of independent claims 1, 13, and 20, and all claims depending therefrom, and that these claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to these claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the application and all claims are now in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

If any extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) are required in order for this submission to be considered timely, Applicants hereby petition for such extensions. Applicants also hereby authorize that any fees due for such extensions or any other fee associated with this submission, as specified in 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17, be charged to deposit account 502306.

Respectfully submitted,

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